ANDREW MARR:
Like any major public service, the police have had their problems over the years, but the current talk is of a crisis of ethics and very serious. The so-called Plebgate affair has raised a question: if a cabinet minister was fitted up, what hope for the rest of us? Well a new code of ethics, a sort of Hippocratic oath for the police has just been published. Is it really necessary? I’m joined now by Sir Hugh Orde who leads the Association of Chief Police Officers. Good morning.

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Good morning.

ANDREW MARR:
You must have watched the evidence given to the Select Committee by the police officers involved at the centre of this, like everybody else. What did you think? What was going through your mind?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Well I watched every moment of the Select Committee and, you’re right, it was not a good day for policing. The stark facts are the three officers should have apologised in
the same manner and style as the chief constables did. But on a positive side, what we had there was a very public and transparent analysis of what was going on by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, and three chief constables stepping up and being held to account. I think that’s a very important point.

ANDREW MARR:
Nonetheless, if you hear the tape recording of the meeting with Andrew Mitchell and then you see what those three police officers said outside, the word ‘lie’ is almost unavoidable. They didn’t apologise for that. They apologised for the choreography of what happened. That’s not acceptable, is it? They should have gone much further.

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Indeed so. And, whatever else is discussed, what was found in that case was that the officers’ standard of conduct fell below that required, and on that analysis alone (coughs) - excuse me - they should have said they were sorry.

ANDREW MARR:
They were sorry. And two of the three of their chief constables then didn’t apologise either, which again I think will shock a lot of people. Much more has to be done. They need to be disciplined and the police chie… the senior constables also need to be disciplined, don’t they? Or face some kind of …

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Well the way I saw it were the three officers, the three chief officers did apologise. The difference was around should the case be reinvestigated or not. And I’m very clear on this. What we need is an independent investigation rather like the ones I had in Northern Ireland. In this case, the IPCC should have taken it on. There is no question about that. It was top of a seriousness agenda. We do not have an independent system. In Northern Ireland that event would have been investigated independently of the police in its totality.

ANDREW MARR:
But it was the chief constables who decided there was no case for misconduct
proceedings, wasn’t it?

**SIR HUGH ORDE:**
The deputy chief constables form a view on the seriousness of the case and the finding of the case.

**ANDREW MARR:**
But they were wrong about that.

**SIR HUGH ORDE:**
Well they will have to stand up and explain the reasons behind that, and indeed that’s what the chief officers did at the Select Committee.

**ANDREW MARR:**
Can we be clear? Do you think the Independent Police Complaints Commission is not fit for purpose in the UK?

**SIR HUGH ORDE:**
It’s a very different system. It’s not entirely independent. What this case shows is of course they supervised the investigation. I think in these cases what we need is one which is entirely independent. That builds public trust and frankly, as a chief constable, it’s a far better place to be.

**ANDREW MARR:**
So for people watching who think well an ombudsman, IPCC, it all seems a bit obscure, a bit … What’s the real difference?

**SIR HUGH ORDE:**
They are entirely different. The Police Ombudsman in Northern Ireland had total control of every investigation and every complaint from any citizen. I did not touch them. That is a truly independent system. It is extremely expensive, I have to say - and cost would be a factor in that decision, which has to be a matter for government to decide upon.
ANDREW MARR:
But that would end completely the idea of the police in effect judging their own alleged misconduct?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Indeed it does.

ANDREW MARR:
And you’d like to see that brought in as soon as possible here?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
I think a system like that - doesn’t have to be identical - is a very effective system. But there is a reality about this, which is simply the finances.

ANDREW MARR:
Can I ask you about this so-called Hippocratic oath for the police, which at one level seems almost comic - police have to promise not to fit people up, they have to promise to be whistleblowers where necessary, they have to promise to be honest and only use the powers they’ve got. You’d kind of think they knew that already, wouldn’t you?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
That’s a slightly unfair analysis, Andrew. (Marr laughs) I think it’s far more important than that. We have a new College of Policing, led by a very senior chief constable, Alex Marshall, who’s driving this agenda forward on behalf of a leadership which I have the privilege to represent this morning. The code is not rocket science; it’s a universal standard that applies across the country. I think that’s important. I think it’s far more serious than you may … you suggest, and I think it sets a standard of expectation. It’s a public document and it’s currently out for consultation, so the public have a right to have a say in what the final product should look like. That’s important too.

ANDREW MARR:
What about the idea of all police wearing cameras and recording devices, so that
their interactions with members of the public are actually on the record?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Of course cameras are not new. Cameras have been piloted since indeed 2008 in this country and they’re subject to some form of experimentation now. I have a reservation about some blanket policy that requires us to fill every interaction with a citizen. There are some real issues around civil liberties - the notion of us filming in some people’s private houses where they may not want us to film. We have to think this through carefully and, again, the College of Policing will undertake that research on behalf of the service. So for the first time we have an evidence based research and analysis which we can then draw on as chief officers. But the notion that every citizen wants every interaction filmed, I think many would have reservations about.

ANDREW MARR:
We’ve also seen the Policing Minister suggest bringing in people from abroad - the States in particular - right at the top of our policing structure, and opening up the top jobs to people who haven’t been police before. What do you make of that?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Well we’ll have to wait and see. Of course police and crime commissioners have the sole responsibility now for hiring and - as we’re frequently reminded - firing chief constables.

ANDREW MARR:
Yeah.

SIR HUGH ORDE:
When this process is finalised and the law is passed, they will be allowed to select chief constables from other jurisdictions that have a common law jurisdiction. So we’ll have to wait and see. I’m quite confident that the quality of leadership in this country has nothing to fear from fair competition from outside.

ANDREW MARR:
So the idea of a guy from New York being parachuted in to try and run London,
which is a city with a different culture and a different history, doesn’t worry you as such?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
No, I have some personal concerns about it because I think one of the great strengths of British policing is that we all started at the bottom. We understand what it’s like to be a street cop. I spent 26 years in London. I understand how the city works.

ANDREW MARR:
I’m pressing you on this, but you’re saying really we don’t need these foreign guys coming in?

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Well it’s a matter for police and crime commissioners. It’s not for me to say the Government is right or wrong. I would be surprised if many were successful against the quality of leadership that I have the privilege to represent today.

ANDREW MARR:
Sir Hugh Orde, I think that’s pretty clear. Thank you very much indeed for joining us this morning.

SIR HUGH ORDE:
Thank you.

INTERVIEW ENDS